THE GOVERNMENT AND ORDER OF THE CHVRCH OF SCOTLAND.

NVMB. 23. and 24.

How goodly are thy tents O Iacob, and thy Tabernacles O Israel: for the house full of silver and gold I would not curse, for how shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defie, whom the Lord hath not defied.

COL. 2. 5.

Though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joycing and beholding your order and the stedfastnesse of your faith in Christ.

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THE

GOVERNMENT

OF

ENGLISH

OF

SCOTLAND.

To the Reader.

MY desires at this time to know and to make known to others the form of Government and order of worship used in the Church of *Scotland*, have brought these following lineaments to light. There come daily into my hands without my seeking; some one forme of Church Government or other, as the divers Authors, from their love to Reformation in their judgements did conceive: But I must confesse they did the lesse relish with me that they were directions and modells without the example or practise of any of the Christian Churches, and were *Abstract Idea's* of discipline in the minds of men and not *Disciplina in Subjecto*. One I had, Titled *The forme of government used in the Church of Scotland*, but, being nothing but an Abridgement, and containing generalls onely, It did not satisfie. I found also many of the godly much wearied of the Prelacy, who yet bow their shoulder to bear, and couch down between the two burthens, because, being unacquainted with the Government of the Reformed Churches, they do not know what to choose, and fear (as to them who are in the dark is usuall) they know not what. Such as these do rather suffer themselves to be led away with the policy of *Pacuvius* at *Capua*, which in such a case was emmendable, then resolve to follow the faith of *Abraham* when the Lord called him, *Get thee out of thy Countrey, &c. into a Land which I will shew thee*, *Gen.* 12. 1. What he was to forsake, and the *Terminus a quo* of his removing, he did know; But whether he

was to go and the *Terminus ad quem*, he did not know, resting assured that God would shew it him. In our own affairs we may think the evill known to be better then the good unknown; But it holdeth not in the matters of God, nor when we speak of *Malum turpe* and *bonum honestum*, the evill of sinne and the good of obedience. But as they who travell from the South to the North, losing the sight of the one Pole come in sight of the other, and as they go on the North Pole is elevated to them by degrees: So is it here, if men would once forsake and turn their back upon that which they know to be wrong, and would ask the way to *Zion* with their faces thitherward, the Lord would teach them his way.

I must confesse that I did give too much ear and audience to the misinformation of many (so may I call it now after true imformation) who would have made me to believe, 1. That the true government of that Church was Episcopall, and that beside the order of Episcopacy, there was nothing in that Church, but disorder and confusion through the Parity of their Ministers, ἄκουε οὐδεὶς οὐδὲν οὐδενὸς that all did speak and no man did hear any thing of another. 2. That they had no certain rule or direction for their publike worship, but that every man following his extemporary fansie, did preach and pray what seemed good in his own eyes. And 3. (which was to me an huge rock of offence) That they were enemies to Kings for no other cause, but that they are Kings: and, out of a desire of Anarchy, did preferre Democracie to Monarchicall Government: Great crimes I can not deny, and much to be abhorred, for they are destructive of all Ecclesiasticall and Civile Order, and do break both the staves of beauty and of bonds.

But

But upon tryall I did remember that, if accuſation were guiltineſſe, no party could be innocent, and found that it was nothing ſo as was alledged: for concerning the firſt, I called to minde the practiſe of a painter of old, who being deſired to repreſent the body of *Hercules*, did expreſſe nothing of the lineaments of his face, ſtature or members, but did onely make a reſemblance of the Lyons skin, which he was wont to carry about as the badge of his ſtrength, and the Trophee of his honour. Epiſcopacy was never the face nor order of that Church. In the moſt part of their aſſemblies have they conflicted with it, and by the ſtrength of God obtaining the victory both of old, and much more of late They may well number it among their ſpoiles. The order of their Miniſters each one ſtanding in his own ſtation, and none uſurping over another, and the Subordination of their foure kindes of aſſemblies, joyning the conſent and obedience of the people, are the face and ſtrength of that Church. Againſt the ſecond, The form of prayers, adminiſtration of the Sacraments, admiſſion of Miniſters, Excommunication, ſolemnizing of marriage, viſitation of the ſick, &c. which are ſet down before their *Pſalm*-Book, and to which the Miniſters are to conforme themſelves, is a ſufficient witneſſe: for although they be not tyed to ſet formes and words; yet are they not left at randome, but for teſtifying their conſent and keeping unity, they have their directory and preſcribed order. No where hath preaching and the miniſtery more ſpirituall and leſſe carnall liberty; the Presbytery and aſſemblies encouraging to the one and reſtraining from the other. And againſt the third, Their Confeſſion of Faith, the doctrine and prayers of their Church, their late declarations

rations and remonſtrances, and what is contained in he concluſion of this Treatiſe, expreſſe as much reſpect and reverence to magiſtracy, as any Chriſtian Prince will require.

I was alſo ſtrongly drawn to the liking of that Church by the Teſtimonies given unto their Reformation by ſome of the moſt famous witneſſes of this age.

One is of that worthy Scottiſh Martyr Mr. *George Wiſeheart.*

This Realm ſhall be illuminate with the light of Chriſts Goſpel, as clearly as ever was Realm ſince the dayes of the Apoſtles. The houſe of God ſhall be builded in it, yea it ſhall not lack (watſoever the enemy imagine to the contrary) the very top-ſtone; the glory of God ſhall evidently appear, and ſhall once triumph in deſpight of Satan. But alas, if the people ſhall be after unthankfull, then fearfull and terrible ſhall the plagues be that after ſhall follow. Hiſt. of the Church of *Scotland*, *pag.* 108.

Another of *Beza.*

Magnum hoc Dei munus quod una & religionem purã, & εὐταξίαν, doctrinæ, viz. retinendæ vinculum, in Scotiam intuliſtis. Sic obſecro & obteſtor hæc duo ſimul retinete, ut uno amiſſo alterum diu permanere non poſſe ſemper memineritis. Sicut Epiſcopi papatum pepererunt, ita pſeudoepiſcopos papatus reliquiæ Epicureiſmũ terris invexerunt: hanc peſtem caveant, qui ſalvam Eccleſiam cupiunt, & quam illam in Scotia in tempore profligarit, ne quæ-

This is a great gift of God, that you have brought into *Scotland*, together pure Religion and good order, which is the bond to hold faſt the Doctrine. I heartily pray and beſeech for Gods ſake, Hold faſt theſe two together ſo, that you may remember, that if one be loſt, the other cannot long remain. So Biſhops brought forth popery, ſo falſe Biſhops, the reliques of popery, ſhall bring into the world Epicureiſm. Whoſoever would have the Church ſafe, let them beware of this peſt, and ſeeing you have timely diſpatched it in *Scotland*, I beſeech you never admit it again, albeit it flatter

ſo illam unquam admittat, quantumvis unitatis retinendæ ſpecie, quæ veteres etiam optimos multos fefellit, blandiatur. Bez *Epiſt.* 79.

flatter with ſhew of the preſervation of unity, which hath deceived many of the beſt of the Ancients.

A third of the body of Confeſſions of faith. It is the rare priviledge of the Church of *Scotland* before many, in which reſpect her name is famous, even among ſtrangers, that about the ſpace of four and fifty years without ſchiſme, let be hereſie, ſhe hath kept and holden faſt unity with purity of doctrine. The greateſt help of this unity, through the mercy of God, was, that with the doctrine, the diſcipline of Chriſt and the Apoſtles, as it is preſcribed in the Word of God, was by little and little together received, and according to that diſcipline ſo neer as might be, the whole government of the Church was diſpoſed. By this means all the ſeeds of ſchiſms and errors, ſo ſoon as they began to bud, and ſhew themſelves, in the very breeding and birth, were ſmothered and rooted out. The Lord God of his infinite goodneſſe grant unto the Kings moſt gracious Maieſty, to all the rulers of the Church, to the powers that are the Nurſers of the Church, that according to the Word of God, they may keep perpetually that unity and purity of doctrine, Amen.

Eſt illud Eccleſiæ Scoticanæ privilegium rarum præ multis, in quo etiam ejus nomen apud exteros fuit celebre, quod circiter annos plus minus 54. ſine ſchiſmate nedum hæreſi unitatem cum puritate doctrinæ ſervaverit & retinuerit. Hujus unitatis adminiculum ex Dei miſericordia maximum fuit, quod paulatim tum doctrina, Chriſti & Apoſtolorum diſciplinam, ſicut ex verbo Dei eſt præſcripta, una fuit recepta, & quam proxime fieri potuit, ſecundum eam totum regimen Eccleſiaſticum fuit adminiſtratum. Hac ratione omnia ſchiſmatum atque errorum ſemina quam primum pullulare, aut ſe exerere viſa ſunt, in ipſa quaſi herba & partu ſunt ſuffocata & extirpata. Det Dominus Deus, pro immenſa ſua bonitate Regiæ Majeſtati Sereniſſimo, omnibuſque Eccleſiarum gubernatoribus, poteſtatibus Eccleſiæ nutritiis, ut ex Dei verbo illam unitatem & doctrinæ puritatem perpetuo conſervent, Amen. Corp. Confeſſ. fidei, pag. 6.

The fourth of King *Iames* of happy memory. The Religion profeſſed in this Countrey, wherein I was brought up, and ever mind: profeſſion of, and wiſhes my ſon ever to continue in the ſame, as the onely true form of Gods Worſhip, &c. I do equally love and honour the learned and grave men of either of theſe opinions, that like better of the ſingle form of policy in our Church, than of the many Ceremonies of the Church of *England*, &c. I exhort my ſon to be beneficiall to the good men of the Miniſtry, praiſing God that there is preſently a ſufficient number of good men of them in this Kingdom, and yet are they all known to be againſt the form of the Engliſh Church. Baſildor. To the Reader, And in the Aſſembly 1590 his Majeſty praiſed God, for that he was born to be a King in the ſincereſt Church in the world, &c.

The fift is of *Brightman*, our own Countryman, who joyneth the Churches of *Helvetia*, *Suevia*, *Geneva*, *France*, *Holland*, SCOTLAND, all together into one Church, for the Counter-payn of the Church of *Philadelphia*, becauſe, *ſaith he*, they almoſt live by one and the ſame laws and manner of Government, as touching any matter of moment. Neither doth the diſtance of place break off that ſociety which the Conjoyning of mindes and good will coupleth together, having thus joyned them into one Church, he ſubjoyneth concerning it. Loth would I be to provoke any man to envy, or to grieve him with my words, yet this I muſt ſay there is no place, where the doctrine ſoundeth not more purely, the worſhip of God is exerciſed more uncorruptly: where more faithfull diligence of the Paſtors doth flouriſh, or more free and willing obedience is given by the people, nor yet where there is greater reverencing of the whole Religion among all orders. And afterward, Neither doth it onely keep the doctrine of ſalvation free from corruption, but it doth alſo both deliver in writing and exerciſe in practice that ſincere manner of government, whereby men are made partakers of ſalvation, *Revel. of the Apocal. Chap. 37.*

To theſe may be added what upon the one hand is ſaid

ſaid by theſe of the ſeparation in their firſt petition to to King *Iames*, inſert in their Apology to the Doctors of *Oxford*. We are willing and ready to ſubſcribe to theſe grounds of Religion publiſhed in the Confeſſion of Faith made by the Church of *Scotland*, hoping in the unity of the ſame Faith to be ſaved by Jeſus Chriſt: being alſo like minded for and with other Reformed Churches in points of greateſt moment. And upon the other hand, That the meetings of Miniſters for interpreting Scripture, like unto their Preſbyteries were allowed by *Arundell*, *Hutton* and *Matthew*, three Archbiſhops in *England*, and proved very profitable in the Northern parts for increaſe of knowledge both in Miniſters and People.

But all theſe and the like teſtimonies were to me but like the ſaying of the woman of *Samaria* to her Countrey-men, till I did more fully underſtand the conſtitution and order of that Church. Then did I believe, not becauſe of their teſtimonies, but becauſe I did ſee and know. And from that which I have ſeen and do now know when I have walked and gone round about that Church, when I have told the Towers thereof, marked well her Bulwarks, and conſidered her pallaces, I may without offence affirm three things.

Firſt, That God hath not dealt ſo with every nation, if envy would permit, I might ſay, any nation, as he hath dealt with them. Whereof no cauſe can be given but his own good pleaſure, he ſhoweth mercy, and maketh his Sunne to ſhine on whom and were he will, and of him, and through him, and for him are all things.

Secondly, that it is no marvail if that Nation ſtand to the defence of their Reformation, had the Lord been pleaſed to bleſſe us with the like at the time of our Re-

formation we would not have been ſo unwiſe as to make exchange of it with Prelacy, we would have forſaken all things rather then have forſaken it, It is more ſtrange that any ſhould have been found amongſt them at any time to ſpeak or to do againſt their own Church: But after you have with your reaſon and minde made a generall ſurvey of all ſocieties there is none more grave, more dear then that which each one of us hath with his Countrey; Parents are dear, Children, Friends, familiars are dear; But our native Countrey alone taketh all theſe within her compaſſe, for which what good man would doubt to die, could his death ſerve her for good? So much the more deteſtable is their barbarity, who have with all kinde of wickedneſſe rent aſunder their native Countrey, and both are and have been exerciſed in overturning her from the very foundation.

Sed quum omnia ratione animoque luſtraris, omnium ſocietatum nulla eſt gravior, nulla carior, quum ea quæ cum Repub. unicuique noſtrum eſt. Cari ſunt Parentes, Cari liberi, propinqui, familiares; ſed omnes omnium caritates patria una complexa eſt, pro qua quis dubitet mortem oppetere, ſi ei ſit profuturus? quo eſt deteſtabilior iſtorum immanitas qui lacerarunt omni ſcelere patriam & in eam funditus delendam occupati ſunt & fuerunt, Cicer. Offi. l. 1.

If a Patriote ſpoke ſo of his Countrey, a Citizen ſo of his Republike, what ſhould the Chriſtian born, baptized, and bred in *Scotland* think and ſay, if he have been borne there not only to this mortall, but to that immortall and everlaſting life: No children on earth have better reaſon to ſay, Wee are not aſhamed of our Mother, and it were to be wiſhed that the ſaying were reciprocally true.

Thirdly, having the pattern of all the Reformed Churches before us, and this example ſo neer unto us, what need we to ſtand amazed, as not knowing what to chooſe; To abide that which we have been, is neither profitable nor poſſible, To conjoyn the two in one is but the mixture of Iron with Clay, and muſt needs make

make the diſtemper greater. It were well for us (and no other well for us can I ſee) that laying aſide our high conceit of our ſelves, and the low eſteem of other reformed Churches We would reſolve to follow them as they follow Chriſt, and not to deſpiſe the government of Chriſt, becauſe they ſeeme to be but Molehils; But to conforme to them, becauſe they are conforme to Chriſt, and to the pattern ſhewed in the Mountain. What reciprocation of giving and receiving in matters of Religion, hath beene betweene this and the Scottiſh Nation may be knowne by the words of *Beda*, but ſpeaking in his own idiome, according to the grounds of popery.

Nec multo poſt illi quoque qui inſulam Hii incolebant Monachi Scoticæ Nationis, cum his quæ ſibi ſubdita erant monaſteriis, ad ritum paſchæ, & tonſuræ Canonicum, domino procurante, perducti ſunt &c. And afterward, *Quod mira divinæ factum conſtat diſpenſatione pietatis, ut quoniam Gens illa quæ noverat ſcientiam divinæ cognitionis, libenter ac ſine invidia, populo Anglorum communicare curavit, ipſa quoque poſtmodum per Gentem Anglorum, in eis quam minus habuerat, ad perfectam vivendi normam perveniret.* Beda eccleſ. hiſt. gentis Angl. l. 5. c. 23.

Not long after the Monkes of the Scottiſh Nation, who lived in the Iland *Hii*, with the Monaſteries under their power were brought into the rite of obſerving of *Eaſter*, and of ſhaven Crownes. The Lord bringing it ſo to paſſe (he ſhould have aſcribed it to another ſpirit). Which certainly was done by the marvellous diſpenſation of divine mercy, that becauſe that Nation, who had the ſcience of divine knowledge, did willingly and without envy communicate the ſame to the people of *England*; that the ſame Nation afterward ſhould by the Nation of the *Engliſh* attain unto the perfect rule of living in theſe things which they had not before.

The

The Governement and Order

OF

The Church of Scotland.

A *Deſcription and not a Demonſtration of the Church of Scotland is intended*; non jus ſed factum, *their doing ſimply and not the reaſon of their ſo doing is deſired: The delineation therefore of the face of that Church, without artificiall Colours and diſpute of her comelineſſe and beauty, is nakedly expreſſed in two Parts: The one of her* Officers, *the other of her* Aſſemblies.

The first part.

I. *Of the Officers of the Church.*

BEside the ordinary and perpetuall Officers, which are *Pastors*, *Doctors*, *Elders*, and *Deacons*. The Church of *Scotland* hath no other at this time, nor did at any time acknowledge any other: These being warranted by Christ and his Apostles, the extraordinary Ministers unto whom his will was revealed, and being sufficient for all the necessary uses of the Churches, as Exhortation, Teaching, administration of the Sacraments, Government, and distribution.

The Offices of Apostles, Evangelists, and Prophets were extraordinary, and continued in the Christian Church, so long as by the Will of God, it was needfull for the well of the Church; who although in regard of their order, degree, manner of

Miniſtration, and the places, which they did hold, which is called *ſucceſsio in gradum eundem.* They have properly none to ſucceed them: yet in reſpect of their doctrine, holineſſe of life, and ſubſtance of their Miniſtery, which is *ſucceſsio in caput*, all faithfull Paſtors, lawfully called to their functions, are their ſucceſſors: And in this ſenſe not only their firſt reformers, who had ſomewhat extraordinary, but all their faithfull Miniſters ſince, who have laboured in the Word and Doctrine, for the planting, preſerving and purging of Religion to the edification of the Church, and no other, are ſucceſſors to the Apoſtles.

The Office of a Biſhop conſiſting in power or priority above a Paſtor, as having no warrant in the Scripture, as being a member of the wicked Hierarchy of the Pope (for, although this priority of Prelates had place in the Church before the Pope aſcended to the top of his Ambition; yet every corruption in doctrine, worſhip, but eſpecially in government, which, ſince the myſtery of iniquity began to work, is retained by the Pope, and by his authority is obtruded

obtruded upon the Church, they conceive to be His) and as a curſed tree, which amongſt them hath brought forth no better fruits, then hereſie, and errors in doctrine, idolatry and ſuperſtition in worſhip, Tyranny and perſecution in Government, and leudneſſe, and profanity of life both in Paſtors and People; They have abjured and removed out of their Church, together with all the branches of that Hierarchy, and all the offices, titles, dignities, and courts depending thereupon as may be ſeen in their confeſsion of faith, Books of diſcipline, and acts of aſſemblies of old, and of late.

In the beginning of their reformation they had no conſtitute Presbyteries, nor ſuch provinciall and generall aſſemblies as they had afterward, and upon the other part they had *ſuperintendents, viſiters of certain parts of the Countrey, and Commiſsioners for Provinces*: But they who deſire to know the conſtitution and condition of that Church, muſt diſtinguiſh between her infancy, and her riper age, between her deſires, deſignes, and endevours, and her attainments, proceedings and performances;

for how ſoon it was poſſible for them, preſbyteries and aſſemblies, which from the beginning had been intended, were erected and eſtabliſhed; And no ſooner was this brought to paſſe, But ſuperintendents and all others of that kinde, which at firſt were of neceſſary uſe in viſiting the Country, and in planting of Churches, were declared to be neither neceſſary nor expedient for the Church.

The Church of *Scotland* hath been diſquieted and much troubled with Epiſcopacy ſince the beginning, and at laſt by the ambition of vain men, by the power and working of civill authority, and by the corrupt aſſemblies of Miniſters, had ſome footing, and was in end raiſed to a great height, and did become a mountain. And yet the office of a Biſhop was never received in that Church. But when ſome Miniſters, who in regard of their benefices were called Biſhops, had, by their own uſurpation and the ſlaviſh diſpoſition of their brethren, obtained ſome degree and power over them. They did come into *England*, and, without the conſent or knowledge of the Church,

Church, received consecration, and returning home, did consecrate others like themselves.

II. *Of their calling.*

AS no man ought to presume to enter into any office Ecclesiasticall without an inward calling from God, who only discerneth the intentions, and desires of the heart, whether they be earthly or heavenly, whether they be set upon the glory of God, and edifying of the Church, or upon the means of this life; So are there none here admitted without the approbation and judgement of men according to the rules of the Word, and the received order of the Church.

This outward calling of the Officers of the Church doth consist in Election and Ordination, after due triall and examination of their soundnesse in religion, and godlinesse of life: For the better understanding of the order of the calling of their Ministers, it is to be considered,

That in every one almost of their *Classes*, or greater Presbyteries, there be Students of

Divinity; whereof ſome, if they have opportunity of their Studies, do make their abode within the bounds of the Presbytery, and attend the meetings thereof: Others, who are the greater part, ſtay at the Univerſities, and in the time of vacation come home and wait upon the Presbytery.

The abilities of both the one ſort and the other, are tryed in private, before the Presbytery, and how ſoon they are found fit to come in publike, they enter upon the exercise or prophecy with the Miniſters of the Presbytery, and at ſometimes are employed and allowed to preach before the people: By which mean their gifts and abilities are known to the people, as their manners are manifeſt by their converſing amongſt them.

Out of the number of theſe Propoſants, or (as they call them) *Expectants*, the Paſtor is nominated to the vacant place by the Elderſhip, and by the Miniſter, if any be, with the conſent and good liking of the people, and if they can pitch upon none within the bounds of their own Presbytery they have their liberty to make their choice of an *Expectant*

pectant of good eſteem and report in ſome other Presbytery.

The Perſon thus known and nominated, is by the particular Elderſhip, named to the greater Presbytery, where he is examined of his skill in the Languages, *Latine*, *Greek*, and *Hebrew*, in his interpreting of Scripture, in the controverſies of Religion, in his gift of exhortation, in the holy and Eccleſiaſticall Hiſtory and Chronologie; And firſt of all, Of his life and manner of converſation; wherein if he be found vitious or ſcandalous, he is not to be admitted to any other examination; Being thus examined, and found qualified for that charge, he is ſent to the vacant place, that the people hearing him, may have the greater aſſurance of his gifts for edification.

After the people have heard him, ſome Miniſter of the Presbytery is appointed to preach to that people of the neceſſity of the Miniſtery, of the excellency of a faithfull Miniſter, of the qualities of a Miniſter, and of the obedience due to the Goſpel, or of ſome ſuch Theme: And at the ſame time a publike Edict is ſerved, That if any perſon or perſons,

perſons, have any thing to object againſt the literature, doctrine, or life of ſuch a man, why he may not be a profitable Miniſter of ſuch a Pariſh, They ſhall appear before the Presbytery in ſuch a place, and at ſuch a time, that their objections may be tryed and diſcuſſed.

Upon the day appointed, the Door-keeper of the Presbyterian meeting, doth call three ſeverall times, if there be any to object againſt the Perſon nominated, and if any thing be alleadged againſt him by any of that particular flock, or any other to whom he is known, it is duely and equally pondered by the Presbytery, and if it be found to have any weight, or the caſe be doubtfull, the ordination is ſuſpended till a more perfect triall; Otherwiſe if there be nothing but ſilence, they uſe to proceed.

So that no man is here obtruded upon the people againſt their open or tacite conſent and approbation, or without the voices of the particular Elderſhip with whom he is to ſerve in the Miniſtery. But if the perſon nominated be a Paſtor of ſome other flock, and his faithfulneſſe known in his

former

former charge, this proceſſe is ſpared, and his tranſlation more ſpeedily expede, if there be no impediments of another kinde.

Upon the day appointed for accompliſhing his election, and for his ordination, which is in due time made known to the Congregation, and agreed upon with them, a Faſt is ordained to be kept, with more than ordinary ſupplication for the aſſiſtance and bleſſing of God, in a work of ſo great concernment: And one of the Paſtors of the Presbytery is appointed to preach to that people of the mutuall duties of Paſtor and people. All which being done, the party, (who, during the time of the exerciſe of publike worſhip, hath been ſitting in a conſpicuous place before the Pulpit, accompanied with the Elders, and ſome Miniſters of the Presbytery) is called up, and demanded concerning his willingneſſe and deſire to ſerve the Lord JESUS, for the good of that people; with other queſtions of that kinde; and the people alſo are demanded, whether they will receive him for their Paſtor, and ſubmit themſelves unto his Miniſtery in the Lord. Both having declared their readi-

neſſe and mutuall conſent, The Miniſter cometh from the Pulpit, and with ſo many of the Miniſters preſent, as may conveniently come neer, lay their hands upon his head, and in the Name of JESUS do appoint him to be the Paſtor of that people, praying that from JESUS CHRIST, who is at the right hand of the Father, and giveth gifts unto men, he may finde the demonſtration of the Spirit, and the power and bleſſing of GOD in his Miniſtery, to the comfort of that people. Therafter the whole Elderſhip give unto him the right hand of fellowſhip. And laſt of all, the Miniſter goeth to the Pulpit, and concludeth the whole action with pertinent thankſgiving and prayers, a Pſalm is ſung, and the Aſſembly diſſolved with the bleſsing.

By this it may appear that Paſtors or Presbyters are not there admitted at large, without aſsignation to a particular flock, like Maſters of Art, or Doctors of Phyſick. They conceive it to be as prepoſterous for Ordination to go before the Election of Miniſters in the Church, as it is firſt to Crown a King, or Inſtall a Magiſtrate, and thereafter

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tochooſe him: next in the ordination of their Miniſters they uſe none of the ridiculous toyes, and apiſh conceits of Popery; but, according to the ſimplicity of the Apoſtolicall and ancient Church, content themſelves with Faſting, Prayer, and Impoſition of hands; Prayer, to bring down a bleſsing upon the perſon on whoſe head the hands are laid, and Faſting, to make the prayer to aſcend the more fervently.

This liberty of Election is in part prejudged & hindred by Patronages and Preſentations which are ſtill in uſe there, not by the rules of their diſcipline, but by toleration of that wch they cannot amend, in the mean time procuring, that in the caſe of preſentations by Patrons, the examination and tryall by the Presbytery, is ſtill the ſame. The Congregation, where he who is preſented is to ſerve, is called, if they have ought to object againſt his Doctrine or life, after they have heard him, or that their conſent may be had. And if he be found *Reus ambitus*, or to have gone about to procure a preſentation, he is repelled, & declared incapable of that place.

No Paſtor may thruſt himſelf upon a

flock, nor after his entry, desert his charge, or remove himself to another Congregation at his own pleasure. The Deserters, if any be, are appointed to be admonished, and in case of obstinacy, to be excommunicated. If a Minister, upon lawfull and urgent causes, desire to remove from one Congregation to another, or if a Minister be called to another Congregation, for which he is more fit, or be called forth upon grave considerations for some publike employment, tending to the common benefit of the Church; This is not done by private transaction, and particular agreement of Ministers and Congregations, but by the wisedom and authority of the Presbyteries or Assemblies of the Church; Nor is it done by them, but upon such reasons as should move that Church, wherein for the present he ministreth, to give her consent: for whose supply also, either a convenient course is presently taken, or the way of supply is seen to be easie.

The Minister thus removed from one Church to another, receiveth no new ordination, but by vertue of his first ordination he serveth in the place, unto which he is

called

called and elected: Only at his admiſſion one of the Presbytery, who is appointed to preach of the duty of Paſtors and people, and to pray for a bleſſing, recommendeth him to the Congregation, who have before declared their willingneſſe and deſire to receive him, and the Congregation to his care and fidelity, And the Paſtor, if any be, together with the Elders, with whom he ſitteth before the Pulpit, take him by the hand.

Paſtors and Miniſters of the Word, through old age, ſickneſſe, or other infirmitie being diſabled to bear the weight, and diſcharge the duty of their Paſtorall charge, Do notwithſtanding ſtill retain the honour of their office, and comfort of maintenance during their lifetime. And they performing what they are able in teaching, government, viſitation and catechiſing, others are joyned with them by the Presbytery, and with the conſent of the people to be their fellow labourers, and to undergo the main charge.

The ſame courſe of election and admiſſion for ſubſtance, and in form according to the nature of their office, is obſerved in the calling of other Officers, as *Ruling Elders*,

and *Deacons*: At the beginning, and where there be none, the Paſtor, with the graveſt, holieſt, and thoſe of the ſoundeſt judgement, and beſt affection to Religion, do chooſe them with the conſent of the reſt of the people. And where particular Elderſhips are already conſtitute, the Paſtor and the Elders who are now in office, do chooſe ſuch as are to ſucceed thoſe who are removed by death, or any other way, or by viciſſitude are to relieve ſuch as are now in place; And that the election of one or moe at firſt, or afterward may proceed with the conſent of the people, their names are publiſhed and made known to the congregation by the Paſtors, that if ought may be objected againſt any of them, why they may not be received to the office of an *Elder* or *Deacon*, it may be examined, and, if it be found important, others may be choſen. When the day of their admiſſion cometh, the Paſtor having fram'd his doctrine to the purpoſe, calleth them up, and remembring both them of their duty in their charge, and the people of their ſubmitting themſelves unto them, they ar. ſolemnly received with

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lifted up hands, giving their promiſes to be faithfull.

III. *The diſcharge of their duties in particular, and firſt of the Paſtor.*

1. *The order kept in Preaching.*

THe Paſtor is bound to teach the Word of God in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, and beſide all occaſionall, and week day Sermons, which in Cities and Townes uſe to be at leaſt two dayes every week, The Congregation doth aſſemble twice on the Lords day, and for this end notice is given of the time by the ſound of a Bell. When ſo many of all ſorts, men and women, maſters and ſervants, young and old, as ſhall meet together, are aſſembled, The publike worſhip beginneth with prayer, and reading ſome portion of holy Scripture both of the Old and New Teſtament, which the people hear with attention and reverence, and after reading, the whole Congregation joyneth in ſinging ſome *Pſalm*. This reading and ſinging do continue till the Preaching begin; At which time the Miniſter having prefaced a little for quickening and lifting

lifting up the hearts of the people, firſt maketh a prayer for remiſſion of ſin, Sanctification, and all things needfull, joyning alſo confeſſion of ſins, and thankſgiving, with ſpeciall relation to the hearers. After which, in the forenoon is another *Pſalm*, and after the *Pſalm* a prayer for a bleſſing upon the preaching of the Word. His Text is ordinarily ſome part of that Book of Canonicall Scripture, which in his judgement he conceiveth to be fitteſt for the times, and the condition of his flock. The Doctrine deduced, is explained and confirmed by Scripture, and fitly, and faithfully applyed, all in ſuch methode, manner, and expreſſion as may moſt edifie the hearers.

After Sermon he praiſeth God, and prayeth again for a bleſsing, joyning earneſt petitions for the Church Vniverſall, and for the coming of the Kingdom of Chriſt, for all the afflicted Churches, for the Churches in his M^ajeſ. Dominions, for the Church of *Scotland*, Miniſtery and People, for the King, the Queen, the Prince, and their whole Royall Progeny, for all the members of that particular Congregation, as well abſent in their lawfull

lawfull affairs as preſent, for all that are afflicted among them in body, minde or means. The prayer ended, a *Pſalm* is ſung, and the people diſmiſſed with a bleſſing.

In the afternoon either the ſame order in all things almoſt, is followed in performing the parts of publike worſhip, or ſome part of the Catechiſme is expounded, and thereafter ſo much time as may be ſpared is beſtowed in Catechiſing ſome part of the Pariſh warned particularly to attend.

Beſide the publike means they have other three helps for edification, one is an ordinary courſe of Catechiſing on ſuch dayes of the week, as are judged to be fitteſt by the Paſtor, and Elderſhip. Another is the viſitation of families by the Paſtors, and the Elders each one in his own quarter, for trying the manners of the people, whether they walk worthy of the Goſpel, for ſetting, and holding up religious exerciſe in families. And that the Paſtor from his particular knowledge of the flock committed to him, may apply his doctrine, and pray the more pertinently in publike The third is, Examination of all ſorts of perſons, who are not known to have ſome good meaſure of knowledge, before the

Communion. All theſe parts of the Miniſtery in publike and private are performed more diligently, or negligently, according to the faithfulneſſe or unfaithfulneſſe of the Miniſter, who hath according to his work, his praiſe, or cenſure at the viſitation of the Church, by the greater Presbytery.

No Miniſter there, is ſuffered to be a non-reſident, or to have the charge of more Churches; But if two ſmall contiguous Pariſhes be united by the aſſembly, to make up a competent congregation, he Preacheth ſometime in the one, and ſometime in the other Church, as the people do deſire, and the Elderſhip doth direct.

2. *The order of Baptiſme.*

NO other but the Paſtor, who preacheth the Word hath the power of the Miniſtration of the Sacraments; And concerning Baptiſme it uſeth not to be haſtened before ſome day of the publike meeting of the Congregation, nor delayed after, but upon neceſſary impediments, and is never miniſtred in private houſes. Notice is given thereof in due time to the Paſtor, and that by the Father of the child, if he be not juſtly hindered, that a word may be ſpoken to him in ſeaſon.

After

After Sermon on the week dayes, and after Sermon in the afternoon, on the Lords day, The Paſtor remaining in the ſame place, where he hath Preached, and having water in a large Baſin provided, with a fair Linnen-cloth, in a convenient place, and in a decent manner; The Father, or in his neceſſary abſence, ſome other man, who is reputed godly, preſenteth the child to be Baptized.

The action is begun with a ſhort and pertinent prayer, next, ſome words of inſtruction touching the Author, nature, uſe, and end of this Sacrament, the duties to be performed, in the one time, of the perſon to be Baptized, and of the parent or viceparent. Thirdly, he that preſenteth the childe, maketh confeſſion of the Faith, into which the childe is to be Baptized, and promiſeth to bring up the childe in that Faith, and in the fear of God. Fourthly, the Miniſter being informed of the name of the childe, Baptizeth the childe ſo named, by ſprinkling with water, *Into the name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghoſt.* Laſtly, the Miniſter concludeth, as well the publike worſhip, for that time, as the action, with thankſgiving for the Word, and Sacraments, and with prayer for a bleſſing, and with ſuch Petitions,

as he uſeth at other times after Sermon, and in end diſmiſſeth, the Congregation with the bleſſing.

3. The order of miniſtring the Communion, or the Lords Supper.

THe Sacrament of the Lords Supper, is more frequently miniſtred in ſome Congregations, then in other, according to the number of the Communicants, and the Proficiency of the People in the way of Chriſt; and in ſome places upon one Sabbath, in other places upon two, or three Sabbaths, as it may be done moſt conveniently, which is determined by the Miniſter, and Elderſhip of the Church.

None are admited, to the Lords Supper, but ſuch as upon examination are found to have a competent meaſure of knowledge in the grounds of Chriſtian Religion, and the doctrine of the Sacraments; and are able according to the Apoſtles Commandement, and profeſſe themſelves willing, to examine themſelves, and to renew their Covenant made with God in Baptiſme, promiſing to walk as beſeemeth Chriſtians, and to ſubmit themſelves to all the Ordinances of Chriſt. The ignorant, the Scandalous, the obſtinate, and

ſuch

ſuch as are under Cenſure, or publike admonition in the way to cenſure, are not admitted; Neither are ſtrangers received, but upon ſufficient teſtimony, or otherwiſe be very well known.

The Sabbath day next before the Communion ſhall be celebrated, publike warning thereof is made by the Paſtor, and of the doctrine of preparation, to be taught the laſt day of the week, or at leaſt toward the end of the week; That the Communicants may be the better prepared, by the uſe of the means, both in private and publike.

Upon the day of the Communion (notice being given after the doctrine of preparation, of the houres of meeting, which uſeth to be before the ordinary time obſerved other Sabbaths) a large Table decently covered, is ſo placed, as that the Communicants may beſt ſit about it, and the whole Congregation, may both hear and behold.

The Preface, prayers, and preaching of that day, are all framed to the preſent matter of the Sacrament, and the duties of the receivers; after Sermon immediarly the Paſtor uſeth an exhortation, and debarreth from the Table all ignorant, prophane, and ſcandalous

perſons, which being done, he goeth from the Pulpit, and ſitteth down with the people at the Table, where the bread ſtanding before him in great Baſins, fitly prepared for breaking and diſtribution, and the wine in large Cups in like manner, he firſt readeth, and ſhortly expoundeth the words of Inſtitution, ſhewing the nature, uſe, and end of the Sacrament, and the duties of the Communicants; next he uſeth a prayer, wherein he both giveth thanks, eſpecially for the Ineſtimable benefit of Redemption, and for the means of the Word and Sacraments, particularly of this Sacrament, and prayeth earneſtly to God for his powerfull preſence, and effectuall working, to accompany his own Ordinance, to the comfort of his people now to communicate.

The Elements thus being Sanctified by the Word and Prayer, the Miniſter Sacramentally breaketh the bread, taketh and eateth himſelf, and delivereth to the people, ſitting in decent and reverent manner about the Table, but without difference of degrees, or acceptions of perſons; theſe that are neereſt the Miniſter, having received the bread, do divide it from hand to hand amongſt themſelves; when the Miniſter delivereth the bread, according to

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the commandment and example of Chriſt, he commandeth the people to take and eat, ſaying, *Take ye, eat ye; this is the Body of the Lord, which is broken for you: Do it in remembrance of him.* After all at the Table have taken and eaten, the Miniſter taketh the Cup, and drinking firſt himſelf, he giveth it to the neereſt, ſaying, *This Cup is the New Teſtament, in the Blood of the Lord Jeſus, which is ſhed for many, for the remiſſion of ſins; drink ye all of it, for as often as ye do eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do ſhew the Lords death till he come.* All this time the Elders, in a competent number, and in a grave and reverent manner, do attend about the Table, that all who are admitted to the Table, may have the bread and wine in their own place and order of ſitting, the Miniſter alſo, continuing in his place, after the giving of the Elements, doth either by his own ſpeech, ſtir up the Communicants to Spirituall meditations of faith, of the great love of God in Chriſt, and of the Paſſion of Chriſt, and to holy affections of love, joy, godly ſorrow, thankfulneſſe, and whatſoever may concern them at that time, or cauſeth be read the hiſtory of the Paſſion, or ſome other part of Scripture, which may work the ſame effect.

After

After all at the Table have received the Cup, they riſe from the Table, and return in a quiet manner, to their places, another company cometh to the Table, and ſo a third and a fourth, till all have received in the ſame manner as the firſt, during which time of removing of the one, and approaching of the other, the whole Congregation ſingeth ſome part of a Pſalm, touching the Paſſion, or the love and kindeneſſe of God to his people, as *Pſal.* 22, or 103, &c.

After the laſt company hath received, the Miniſter riſing from the Table, goeth to the Pulpit, where, after a ſhort ſpeech, tending to thankſgiving, he doth againe ſolemnely give thankes unto God for ſo great a mercy, and prayeth as on other Sabbaths; The prayer ended, all joyn in ſinging a Pſalm of praiſe, ſutable to the occaſion, and are diſmiſſed with the bleſſing, before which none are to depart, unleſſe in caſe of neceſsity.

The Communion being thus celebrated in the forenoon, the people meet again in the afternoon, at which time, the Miniſter teacheth the Doctrine of thankſgiving, and cloſeth the publike and ſolemn worſhip of that day, from which the people uſe to depart, refreſhed with the

the grace and peace of God, and ſtrengthened, with new and freſh reſolutions to ſerve the Lord.

4. *The order of publike faſting or humiliation.*

SOmetimes the faſt or humiliation is of larger extent, to be obſerved by all the Churches in the Kingdome, ſometime more particular, of one or more Congregations; Sometimes the faſt is kept one day only, ſometimes all the dayes of the week, Sometimes on the Sabbath only, eſpecially in the Countrey Churches; Sometimes upon ſome day of the week alſo, as in Cities or Towns; They neither make difference of dayes for hnmiliation, nor do they keep any ſet faſts or feaſts: all is diſpoſed and done, according as the occaſions, and cauſes do preſſe or require, as may ſerve moſt for the end intended, and may beſt ply with the opportunities, and neceſſities of the Congregation.

The Sabbath next before the faſt, notice is given of the Cauſes of humiliation, and of the times to be obſerved, with earneſt exhortation to the people, to prepare themſelves for afflicting their ſoules, and extraordinary humiliation.

In many places eſpecially in Cities, Towns, and greater Villages, or where the people may conveniently aſſemble, The day before the faſt, the doctrine of preparation to the faſt, is taught expreſsing the nature, and uſe thereof, for averting the wrath of God.

The dayes of the faſt from morning to evening,

are kept holy unto the Lord in the nature of an Extraordinary Sabbath, with abſtinence from meat, and drink, from delights and worldly labours, with the exerciſes of reading the Law, plain preaching, interpretation, and particular application, deep humiliation, and renting of the heart for ſin, large, and hearty confeſsions of ſin, fervent ſupplications, and earneſt ſeeking of God, by prayer for pardon, with ſinging of penitentiall *Pſalms*; after which they have many times, found wonderfull deliverances, and extraordinary bleſſings from Heaven.

5. *The order of marriage.*

ALthough marriage be no Sacrament, nor part of the Worſhip of God, yet they conceive that the Matrimoniall conjunction of Chriſtians, and members of the Church is moſt conveniently ſolemnized in the face of the Congregation, with inſtruction out of Gods Word, of the Inſtitution, uſe, and ends of marriage, and of the duties of married perſons, and with bleſsing by the Miniſter, and with the prayers of the Church.

The parties are contracted before they be married, and before they be contracted, if there be any ſuſpicion of their ignorance, they are examined in the grounds of Religion, and in their knowledge of the mutuall duties, which they owe each to other. Notice alſo is given of the conſent of Parents, or vice-Parents, and that neither of them is contracted

cted before to any other party, nor any impediment from the degrees of Affinity, or Conſanguinity prohibited; The contract and purpoſe of marriage is alſo publiſhed, three ſeverall Sabbaths before the ſame be ſolemnized, and if there be nothing objected to hinder their marriage, then are they ſolemnly married, in the face of the Congregation, before the ending of 40 dayes from the time of the contract.

They require for marriage the free conſent of the parties come to the yeers of diſcretion, and the knowledge and conſent of the Parents; they do not allow of the marriage of Infants, nor ſecret and clandeſtine contracts and marriages, nor do they uſe any idle rites or ſuperſtitious Ceremonies, in the time of the Solemnization.

6. *The Order of Buriall of the dead.*

THough Buriall be no part of the Worſhip of God, nor of the work of the Miniſtry; yet they think meet that an honeſt and competent number of Chriſtians, accompany the Chriſtian friends of the dead unto the Grave, that they may confer and comfort one another by the way, and to ſee the Buriall done in a grave and decent manner, remembring that ſin is the cauſe of death, that Chriſt hath overcome death and the grave, and that they who die in the Lord, ſhall riſe again to life everlaſting.

Their Burials are without ſinging or reading, which the ſuperſtitious do conceive to be profita-

be for the dead, without Funerall Sermons, which do beget superstition, and tend to flattery, make the Gospel to be preached with respect of persons, and are most prested by such as do least regard Sermons at other times; and without Feasting, with affectate shews of mourning, and any further pomp or Ceremony, than civill differences and respects do require.

They conceive, for many reasons, that the places of the assembling of the people for the Word and Sacraments, ought not to be places of Buriall, which is therefore forbidden, and, for the most part, is forborn in that Kingdom.

Registers are ordained to be kept, of the names and times of all that are baptized, of all that are married, and all that are married.

IV. *Of Doctors, and their Office, and of Schools.*

THe Church of *Scotland* hath had no other Doctors, but Masters and Professors of Divinity, in Universities and Colledges, of which, some use to be chosen to be Elders of particular Churches, and Commissioners to the Nationall Assembly, and besides these the Teachers of more private and particular Schools.

They use to be examined and tried, both in their learning, and life, by the Presbitery, and their charge is not only to bring up their schollers in humane literature and liberall Arts, but also in Civill Conversation

ſation and good manners, but eſpecially in the Grounds of Chriſtian Religion, by way of Catechiſme.

As the Doctors of Colledges do keep the meetings of the Presbitery, and by courſe do propheſie, or make the exerciſe with the Miniſters, ſo alſo do the maſters of private Schooles for the greater part of them, who therefore are a part of the Seminarie of the publike Miniſtery, are numbred among the expectants, how ſoon they are enabled, to enter upon the exerciſe, and ſometimes are imployed by the Miniſters to help them, in teaching and Catechiſing of the people.

The Univerſities alſo uſe to be viſited by Commiſſioners delegated from the Nationall aſſembly, that there be nothing taught by the Profeſſors and Doctors, but what is ſound and conſonant to the confeſſion of faith, and the received doctrine, and order of the Church; and to ſee that both Maſters, and Schollers do their duties diligently, eſpecially that their be no ſcandall nor corruption of maners. In like maner the more private ſchooles, are viſited by the Presbiteries, poore ſchollers of good ingines and expectation are provided in a great part of their maintenance, by places of the foundation of Colledges, which are appointed by the Founders, or Reformers, for that uſe, and others are maintained, by Contribution of particular Churches within every Presbitery, which the Paſtor or Elder bringeth

unto them, ſo ſoone as they are choſen by the Presbitery.

V. *Of Elders and their Office.*

THe Calling, Election, and admiſſion of Elders is before ſpoken of. The number of Elders in every Pariſh is not definit, but doth vary according to the number, and neceſſity of the people; In ſome pariſhes 6, in ſome 10, or 12, &c.

Such are choſen to be Elders as come neereſt to the gifts, and qualities required, by the Apoſtle, and after they are choſen, are at all occaſions exhorted by the Paſtor to be enſamples to the flock, and to watch over them faithfully, againſt all corruptions, in religion and life. And as the Paſtor ſhould bee diligent in teaching and ſowing the ſeed, ſo are the Elders deſired to be carefull in ſeeing and ſeeking the fruits in the people.

The Elders do attend with the Paſtor in Chatechiſing the people, do aſſiſt him In viſiting the ſick, In admoniſhing all men of their duty, and if any will not heare them, they bring the diſobedient before the Elderſhip; In cauſing the acts of the aſſemblies, as well particular as generall, to be put in execution; But a principall part of their duty is to joyne alwayes, with the Paſtor in the particular Elderſhip, and in the other aſſemblies of the Church, as they ſhall be called, for exerciſing of diſcipline, and governing the whole Congregation.

VI.

VI. *Of the Deacons and their Office.*

WHat maner of perſons the Deacons ought to be, the Scripture is plain, and ſuch they make choiſe of as are ſo qualified, ſo far as may be; The forme of their election is before expreſſed. Their number muſt be conſidered of, according to the number of the poore, and the proportion of the Congregation, as we ſpake before, of the Elders.

Their maine duty, is to collect, receive, and diſtribute, not onely the almes, for the poore, but the whole Eccleſiaſticall goods, which are not aſſigned and appointed, for the maintenance of particular perſons.

Theſe duties they muſt performe, at the diſcretion and by the appointment of the Paſtor, and Elders; for which cauſe, and not for government, they are to be preſent at the ordinary meetings of the Elderſhip.

The meanes for the maintenance of the poore are collected, by the Deacons, the firſt day of the weeke, and other dayes of the publike aſſembling of the people to the worſhip of God, at the entry of the Church. And if this prove not a competency, then do the people either bring in their Charity, on ſuch dayes as are appointed by the Elderſhip, or are willing to be taxed, according as they ſhall be judged to be able. In ſome Cities, and Pariſhes, where this

this order hath been carefully obſerved, none have been ſuffered to beg, and none have lacked.

Their Miniſters, beſide their Gleab and Manſe, are all provided to certaine, and the moſt part, to competent ſtipends, which are paid either in victuall or moneys, or in both: And if the charge of their family be great, and their children put to Schooles or Colledges, they are helped, and ſupplied by the charity of the people, which uſeth alſo to be extended, if need be, toward their widows and Orphanes, after their deceaſe, of which the whole Elderſhip hath a ſpeciall care.

Every pariſh almoſt hath ſome ſtock for the reliefe of ſtrangers, and for ſupply of the extraordinary neceſſities, of their owne poore: Hoſpitalls have their owne rents, and the publike buildings of the Church, are upholden, by the Patron, and the Freeholders of the Pariſh; unto which, if any be unwilling, he is conſtrained by Law to pay his proportion.

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The Second Part.

I. *Of the Aſſemblies of the Church, and firſt in Generall.*

NO man here, were he never ſo eminent above others, for Piety, Wiſdome, or Learning, or doth he never ſo much arrogate authority, to himſelf, hath the rains of Church Government in his hands to determine, or to doe what ſeemeth good in his own eyes; But all matters are adviſed, determined, and judged with common conſent in the meetings, and aſſemblies of the Church, which for this end are of foure ſorts and degrees, which are commonly called by the names of Church ſeſſions, or particular Elderſhips, or Conſiſtories; Presbyteries, or Claſſes; Provinciall Synods, and Nationall or Generall Aſſemblies.

Each of theſe aſſemblies, hath a Preſident or Moderator, who beginneth, and endeth with prayer; propoundeth matters to be treated; procureth them to be debated if need bee, in an orderly way, that all may be heard, and none interrupted, unleſſe he ſpeak too much; gathereth the voices, which are noted by the Clerk; and pronounceth the ſentence, or if there be an equality, remitteth it to the greater Presbyterie; each of them hath a Clerk, or a Notary; and a Regiſter of all things debated and done by them, eſpecially of ſuch matters as may be of future uſe.

None of theſe aſſemblies, from the leaſt to the greateſt are to treat of matters pertaining to the civill Juriſdiction and Magiſtrate, but only of matters Spirituall and Eccleſiaſticall, that the doctrine and worſhip may be kept in purity, all things be done decently, and in order, in the particular Churches, and that all the members of the Churches may walke worthy of the Goſpell.

The leſſer and inferiour aſſembly is ſubordinate to the ſuperiour and greater, ſo that if any perſon, ſhall think himſelfe wronged or diſtreſſed, by the unjuſt proceeding of the inferiour

riour assembly, it is lawfull for him to seek reliefe of the greater, providing, it be done in an humble and peaceable way, and in the right order, by proceeding to the next greater assembly, and so of the rest, if need be, taking them in their subordination untill either he be satisfied, or, which rarely commeth to passe, he ascend unto the highest of all.

In matters difficult or such as belong to superiour assemblies, References from the lesser are ordinary, but nothing belonging to an inferiour assemblie is brought before a greater, til either it cannot be setled or be disorderly done by them, or some complaint arise. And in that case, so far as may stand with truth and peace, the greater assemblie is carefull to preserve the power and authoritie of the lesser; and therefore matters belonging to inferiour assemblies are commonly remitted unto them by the greater.

*T*here, one Church were it never so great, hath not authoritie over another, nor is it governed by any extrinsecall power; but all the particular Churches are of equall power and authority, and are ruled and judged by themselves and their owne intrinsecall power in

assemblies composed, and consisting of their officers and commissioners from them.

II. *Of Particular Elderships in Parishes.*

THe particular Eldership or Church-session consisteth of one or moe Ministers and of *E*lders so many in number as the proportion of the Congregation doth require, who ordinarily do meet once in the week.

The Deacons are alwayes present with the *E*lders, not for government, but that they may make knowne the case and necessities of the poore, and may consult and receive direction for their supply.

The Minister of the parish is alwayes moderator of this Meeting, and if there be moe Ministers then one, the moderator is either chosen or they doe moderate by course, providing that none bee moderator while any matter is treated, which concerneth his own particular.

The matters treated by this eldership, are such particulars as concerne the worship of God in that Church, as, what dayes of the week are meetest for assembling to the publick worship, if it may be had & be thought necessary, what

what houres on the Lords day before and after noone, which are variable according to the length or ſhortneſſe of the day, in Summer and Winter, what times are fitteſt for publick Catechiſing, and for viſiting of particular families, how often, and at what times the Lords Supper is moſt ſeaſonably miniſtred: all which are proper for keeping of order in that Church, and cannot be ſo fitly determined by a ſuperiour aſſemblie; the *E*lders alſo do here delate ſcandalous perſons, and bring them to publick repentance according to the forme preſcribed in the greater aſſemblies: But if there be any doubt or difficultie, or if the offences and ſcandals be great and hainous, or if the delinquents adde obſtinacie and impenitencie to their fault, then are they warned to appear before the greater *P*resbyterie there to receive order for their cenſure, or to be ſent home again to give ſatisfaction, or to make their repentance in their owne Church where they have given offence, and where the fault was committed: For example, a man behaving himſelfe ſcandalouſlie with a woman, both unmaried and ſingle perſons, is firſt admoniſhed and rebuked; if fornication appeare, he is called before

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the Elderſhip, brought to the ſenſe and confeſſion of his fault, and ordained to make his publick repentance according to the order of the Church, and to abſtaine from all ſcandalous behaviour afterward. But if he prove obſtinate, hee is conveened before the greater Presbyterie, the matter is examined, and either he promiſeth to give obedience to his owne Elderſhip, or in caſe of continued obſtinacie, the cenſures of the Church proceed againſt him. But if there bee a ſcandall of adulterie or murder, the noiſe and ſcandall whereof is far ſpread, and filleth all mens eares round about, the parties are brought before the greater Presbyterie, and the particular Elderſhip doth before prepare the parties for their appearance before the Presbyterie.

The ſame faults which are brought before the particular or greater Presbytery in an eccleſiaſticall way, are alſo puniſhed by the civill magiſtrate, and the pecuniall mulct or penalty is given to the Deacons to bee kept in the Church treaſure for the benefit of the poore, or other pious uſes.

Nothing uſeth to bee done by the leſſer or greater presbytery in ordering the publicke

Worſhip

Worſhip, in cenſuring of delinquents or bringing them to publick repentance, but according to the ſetled order of the Church, and with expreſſe or tacite conſent of the congregation, and if there be any new emergents that cauſe doubting or hæſitation, the matter is remitted to the greater aſſemblies of the Church.

III. The Order of Excommunication.

ALL baptized perſons, when they come to age and diſcretion, are not admitted to the Lords table; but ſuch onely as either upon examination are found to have a competent meaſure of knowledge in the principles of Religion, doe profeſſe that they are beleevers and doe live unblameably, or comming from another Congregation bring with them ſufficient teſtimonie that they are ſuch, or are otherwiſe well knowne and approved.

The Miniſter and Elders uſe all meanes in private and publick to bring all others within the pariſh to knowledge, faith, and holineſſe of life, that they may be fitted for the Lords Table.

But this not admiſſion to the Communion is one thing, and excommunication of haynous

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or obstinate offenders is another thing very different.

In case of obstinacie and wilfull impenitencie, even when the offences are not so great and scandalous, they proceed to excommunication, but with great meeknesse, longsuffering, and by many degrees, the censure being so weighty, and they desirous to gaine the sinner to repentance.

If any person walke unworthy of the Gospell, or commit any trespasse, he is (unlesse the scandall bee publike and notorious) admonished first secretly by one, next by two or three more. And thirdly, If he contemne both, then according to the order prescribed by our Saviour, *Mat.* 18. The matter is brought before the Minister and Elders where he is accused both of the trespasse and of the contempt. If he cannot yet be brought to repentance, then is the matter in some measure made knowne unto the Congregation, and hee called before the greater Presbytery; where if he give signes of his repentance, he is remitted to satisfie his owne session. But if he persist in his obstinacie, then by the Ordinance of the Presbytery, the particular elder-

ship

ſhip is to proceed againſt him with the cenſures of the Church even to excommunication.

The matter being thus heard knowne and judged, and the whole proceſſe reviſed by the greater presbytery, the next Sabbath without delay, the treſpaſſe and order of admonitions are declared to the Congregation, and the perſon without ſpecification of his name, admoniſhed yet to ſatisfie: Which if he ſtill refuſe to doe, the next Sabbath his name with his offence and contempt, are publiſhed, if he yet continue obſtinate, then the next, which is the third Sabbath, is he charged publickly to ſatisfie for his offence and contempt under the paine of excommunication. If now he offer himſelfe to the particular Presbyterie, then do they at the appointment of the Presbyterie, give order for his publick repentance, the removing of the ſcandall, and his reconcilement to the Church, otherwiſe the Miniſter proceedeth in this order.

The Sabbath after the third publick admonition, the Miniſter with conſent of the Elderſhip, is to make knowne to the Congregation that ſuch a perſon is to be excommu-

nicated, warning all that have any thing to object against it, that they appeare the next seſſion day: And for the preſent, that the whole Congregation powre forth their ſupplications, that God would grant him repentance, and to come out of the ſnare of the devill. If nothing be objected, or if none for him witneſſe any appearance of repentance, then is the danger of the perſon, and the weight of the ſentence laid open the next Sabbath, and he the ſecond time prayed for publickly. If at laſt upon the next Sabbath there be no ſigne of repentance, then is he praied for the third time, and there being no meane unaſſaied, nor remedy left to reclaime him, hee is ſtrucken with the terrible ſentence of excommunication, with calling upon the Name of God to ratifie the ſentence in Heaven, and the people warned to hold him as an Heathen, or a Publican, and to ſhun all communion with him, except in naturall and civill duties to be ſtill performed by ſuch as are bound. It is to bee underſtood, that where the crimes are ſuch that they cry to the heavens for revenge, waſte the conſcience, and by the law of God deſerve death, and the tranſgreſſor certainly

tainly knowne, the proceſſe may be more ſummarie, & excommunication more haſtned, as on the other part of abſolution, the time would be longer, and the triall of repentance more exact.

After excommunication, he is permitted to come to the preaching of the Word, yet ſo as it may appeare that he commeth as one not having communion with the Church. Neither is he debarred from private counſell, inſtruction, admonition, and prayer, that in end his ſpirit may be ſaved. If after excommunication the Elderſhip finde the ſignes of repentance, as the good life and behaviour of the excommunicate, declaration of the griefe of his heart, and his humble ſubmiſſion to the order of the Church, in all things that may reconcile him to God and his people, they ſhall with joy of heart make it knowne to the Congregation by the Miniſter, that they may alſo have joy over their brother repenting: or if they have ought to object againſt the truth of his repentance, they may give notice thereof at the next meeting of the Elderſhip, where if nothing be alleaged againſt him, after he hath obeyd the injunctions of the Elderſhip

for his further humiliation and the better tryall of his repentance, he is either brought before the greater Presbyterie, as all other penitents for great crimes, or by relation from his owne *Elder*ſhip, is to give them ſatisfaction in the ſignes of his repentance that he may be abſolved.

As all publick penitents are received, ſo is the excõmunicate abſolved in the face of the congregation, before whom being brought by the *Elders* at the time appointed, he maketh free confeſſion of his ſinne and mourneth for it, cryeth to God for mercie, ſeeketh to be reconciled to the Church and promiſeth new obedience; with which all being ſatisfied, and willing to receive him into their common and mutuall conſolation, the Miniſter who preacheth for that time pronounceth him upon his repentance to bee abſolved in the Name of Chriſt from his ſinne, and free of the cenſurs of the Church, and have right through faith to *Chriſt* and all his benefits and ordinances, praiſing God for his grace, and praying that he may be fully accepted to his favour, looſed in Heaven, and heare the voice of joy and gladneſſe.

After

After the ſentence of abſolution, the Miniſter ſpeaketh to him as to a brother exhorting him to watch and pray, or comforting him if he have need, the Elders imbrace him, and the whole congregation keepeth communion with him as if he had never offended.

As the Presbyterie excommunicateth profane profeſſors, ſo doth it alſo depoſe *P*reachers, if they be teachers of corrupt Doctrine, if their lives continue ſcandalous after admonition, if they be buſie in renting the Church a ſunder by ſchiſme and diviſion; if they be given to blaſphemie, profanation of the Lords day, ſimonie, perjurie, drunkenneſſe, fighting, or any other ſinne, for which, whether in reſpect of the greatneſſe of the ſinne, or by reaſon of the contempt and obſtinacie when the ſinne is not ſo great, private perſons are excommunicated; and although they be upon their repentance abſolved from the ſentence of excommunication, yet in ſome caſes eſpecially, where the crime inferreth a perpetuall infamie, are they never readmitted to the Miniſtery, except upon the unanimous and moſt earneſt deſire of the whole Church where they ſerved before.

IV. Of

IV. Of greater Presbyteries or Classes.

THe Presbyterie or Classicall meeting doth consist of particular neighbouring Churches in such a circuite as may conveniently meet together, to the number of ten, sixteene, twentie, or so many as the vicinitie of the places, and parishes may well accommodate.

It is supposed that the whole particular *E*lderships cannot well assemble in one place ordinarily, neither is it necessarie. There be therefore beside the Minister or Ministers of the Congregation who are supposed to be perpetuall members of the Presbyterie, some of speciall note chosen out of the *E*lders & by them, who receiving from them commission may represent the whole; from each particular *E*ldership, one of the *E*lders with the Minister or Ministers repaireth to the place of meeting: so that the members of this Presbyteriall meeting are all the Ministers within the Circuit, and one *E*lder delegated from each particular Eldership.

None of the Ministers are permitted to be absent, unlesse they be detained by necessarie impediments

impediments or extraordinarie imployments. And therefore the day of the meeting of the Presbyterie may not be destinate to ordinarie preaching? Nor are they to wait that day upon solemnizing of mariages. The names are called by the Clerk, and the absents are noted and examined the next day upon the reasons of their absence; and if any happen to absent themselves many dayes without reasonable causes, they are set apart and censured as guiltie of the contempt or neglect of the order of the Church. But the Elders are not so strictlie tied to ordinarie attendance; but if there be any matter of great weight to be handled, they are all warned to be present: And if hee who was formerly *Commissioner* may not assist, another *Commissioner* in his place may bee chosen by the *Eldership*.

It is permitted to the expectants having entered before upon the publick exercise or propheſie to sit by the Ministers and Elders in the meeting of the Presbyterie, and to give their judgement of the doctrine, but they have no voice when matters of doctrine or discipline are debated. And in the handling of some matters which are thought fit to be concealed and

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kept ſecret, till they be by common conſent publiſhed, they uſe to be removed.

Becauſe the whole diſcipline in a manner is in the hands of the Presbyterie, they are to meet once a week or fortnight upon a certaine day, and in a certain place, but in ſome places, through the length and deepneſſe of the way in winter, they do not meet ſo often.

The ſubject and matters treated in the Preſbytery are all the *Eccleſiaſticall* matters of weight, which concern the particular Churches there repreſented, as the examination, ordination, ſuſpenſion, and depoſition of Miniſters; ſcandals of Miniſters in doctrine, life, or any part of their calling; the decerning of excommunication, references, and appellations from particular *Elderſhips*, and the amending of any thing that hath beene negligently or weakly done by them; the anſwering alſo of queſtions and requeſts from other Presbyteries, Churches, or perſons, or ſending of Commiſſioners in ſome caſes to other Churches or Presbyteries, whether to admoniſh or adviſe them, or to ſeek counſell from them, but ſo that they have no autho ity wi hout the limi s of their own conſociation.

The

The Miniſters and *E*lders who are *C*ommiſſioners, together with the expectants and others who are pleaſed to be preſent, meeting in the place, and at the day and houre appointed, which uſeth to be one halfe houre after nine a clock in the forenoone, whereof warning is given by the ſound of a bell, that ſo all the affaires of that day (unleſſe there be ſomewhat extraordinary to hold them longer) may bee exped againſt mid-day, doe begin with prayer, and proceed to the textuall interpretation of Scripture, which is done by the Miniſters, each one in his own place by courſe, or by the expectants, whoſe names are ſet forth in a table, or written in the Regiſter of the *P*resbyterie for that end; after the firſt ſpeaker, ſome other who followeth in order, and is alſo appointed by the Presbyterie the day before, ſpeaketh in the ſecond place, collecting ſome doctrines one or moe upon the text expounded and ſhewing the uſe thereof. The ſecond ſpeaker having ended about eleven a clock, the exerciſe is cloſed with thankſgiving by him who ſpake firſt. The matter of each dayes exercſe is ſome portion of that particular book

of the Old or New Teſtament agreed upon in the Presbyterie: once every moneth ſome common place or controverſie is handled, unto which the exerciſe giveth place for that day. The ground is read in Scripture; the ſtate of the queſtion propounded, the arguments for the truth preſſed and vindicated from the Sophiſtication of the adverſaries; but the arguments *contra* are left to bee proponed in the Presbyteriall meeting by ſuch Miniſters as are called by the Moderator to diſpute upon the propoſitions, or *Theſes* exhibit, the day of the meeting next before, by the contraverſar, and are propugned by him, the Moderator being *præſes* of the diſputation. That the Presbyterie may go thorow all the controverſies, they have alſo a table wherein they are all digeſted in order, ſo that each miniſter or expectant knoweth a moneth before what is next to be treated.

The exerciſe or common head of controverſie ended in publick, the people depart, and the Miniſters and Elders with others, who are permitted to bee preſent, goe to the private place of their meeting, where all being ſet in order,

order, and the Moderator having begun with prayer, the doctrine delivered in publick is examined, and each one of the Presbyterie and expectants, either approveth, or in charity and ſoberneſſe of ſpirit, propoundeth his doubt againſt any point ſpoken of, which being done, the ſpeakers for that day are called upon (they being apart at this time) their interpretation and doctrine approved, and they encouraged or (if there be cauſe) they are in a brotherly manner admoniſhed. The doctrine cenſured (for this they call the cenſure of the doctrine.) The matters before mentioned to be the ſubject of the Presbyteriall jurisdiction, are propounded, modeſtly debated, and either concluded, or taken to further deliberation, or remitted to the Synod, and ſo the meeting concluded with prayer. The Moderator either continueth in his place betweene one Provinciall Synod and another, or for a ſhorter time, but they think it not fit to change the Moderator at every meeting.

The *P*resbyteries alſo do viſit the ſeverall Churches within their bounds, either by holding their full meetings at the Churches, or by

ſending their commiſſioners thither, that they may ſee how the ordinances of Chriſt are uſed and obeyed, by the Miniſter, Elderſhip, and all the congregation, and that if any thing be amiſſe, it may be rectified.

V. Of Provinciall Synods.

THe whole Kingdome is by the wiſdome of the Generall aſſemblie, ſo divided in Provinces, as the Miniſters and Elders may, for vicinity of place, beſt meet in Provinciall Synods, without reſpect to Epiſcopall Dioceſes, the particular Churches whereof are ſo far caſt a ſunder in *Scotland* that they cannot conveniently joyne in provinciall Synods.

The provinciall Synode is of the ſame conſtitution with the Presbyterie, and doth conſiſt of all the Miniſters, and one Elder having commiſſion, as before, from each particular Church within the province.

It meeteth ordinarily twice a yeare, but the place & the time of the meeting are choſen according to the conveniencie of the Churches of the province, and as the exigence of their affaires

faires doth require. The Moderator of the former Synod, openeth the Synod with a Sermon, fit for such an assembly; and after Sermon setting himselfe downe in his place, with the clerk of the Synod (who for the most part is one of the Ministers chosen by plurality of voices) beginneth with prayer, causeth the names of the Ministers to be read, who not only answer for their owne presence (the absent being noted) but also give up the names of the Commissioners from the severall Churches, which are written down by the Clerk, and their commissions also read, if need be, and proceedeth to the chooſing of a new moderator.

The Moderator is thus chosen. A list is made by the former moderator of foure or five of the ablest men for wisdome, authority and dexterity for such an employment which is approved by the consent of the Synod. And if any member of the Synod be pleased to adde any other so qualified to the list, his name is joyned with the former, and out of this list the Moderator is chosen by the suffrages of the Ministers and *E*lders, and set in the place of the former Moderator. The

The new Moderator first of all calleth for the Registers of the severall Presbyteries, and putteth them in the hands of the Ministers of other different Presbyteries to be revised and examined, That by the Records it may bee knowne how they have kept order, and performed what hath beene recommended unto them by the preceeding Synods. And what and how matters have been treated by them at every session, that they may be censured or allowed, which upon the report of the revisers is accordingly done in the face of the Synod.

If there be any references from the Synode before, they are first debated and determined, and thereafter new matters are brought into deliberation. What was obscure or difficult for the Presbyteries, or might concerne them all in common, is here resolved and ordered, what hath beene done amisse is redressed. And if any difficultie arise which doth not fall under some Church constitution, it is referred to the nationall assemblie.

Before the assemblie be desolved, each Presbyterie is set a part by course and enquirie made from the rest, if there bee any knowne scandall,

ſcandall, fault, or negligence amongſt them, That it may be in a brotherly manner cenſured, like as upon the day of the meeting of the Presbyterie next going before the Synod; all the members of the Presbyterie ſuffer the like inquirie each one a part by all the reſt.

As the Moderator beginneth and endeth everie ſeſſion before and after noon with prayer, ſo doth he ſomewhat more ſolemnlie cloſe the Synod with ſome pithie and pertinent exhortation, and heartie thankſgiving and praier unto God.

All matters, where theſe Synods are ordinarily kept, are with ſuch diligence exped That the Miniſters (none of them having above a ſhort daies journey, and Tueſday being uſually the firſt day of their meeting) may return to their charge againſt the Lords day, having notice of the day and place of the next following Synod, and carrying with them ſuch acts as are neceſſarie that they may be made known to their particular Elderſhips and congregations. And thanks may be given in every Congregation for the good proceedings of the Synod, and for the libertie of the Churches.

Theſe

These Synods are not alwaies held at one time, and therefore if there be cause, some Commissioners are sent from one Synod to another, for their judgement and advice in matters of difficultie, which is reported at the following Synod for their further resolution, and that so farre as is possible there may bee a conformitie in all things.

VI. Of Nationall Synods or Generall Assemblies.

THe nationall assemblie meeteth once in the yeare, and the time of the following assembly agreed upon before the rising of the former, or oftner *pro re nata*, concerning which some Ministers have commission and warrant from the assemblie to give timely advertisement to the Presbyteries for chooſing and sending their Commissioners.

This great assemblie useth to bee honoured with the Kings Majesties presence either in his royall Person, or by his High Commissioner, who doth all the parts of a Supreame Civill President. In a peaceable ordering of the whole

whole proceedings of ſo frequent and holy a meeting, that all mens reaſons and voices may be heard, and in acquainting himſelfe with the grounds of every conſtitution that ſhall be agreed upon, that by his *P*rincely authoritie they may be obſerved, and if need require the ſanction of the Civill Law may be added, for which end alſo certaine *C*ommiſſioners from the aſſemblie are ſent to attend the *P*arliament.

*I*t doth *C*onſiſt of Commiſſioners from the Presbyteries or *C*laſſes, three Miniſters and one *E*ld r from each *P*resbyterie, who are choſen by the voices of the Miniſters and *E*lders ſent from the particular *E*lderſhips, and of one *C*ommiſſioner from the Church ſeſſion of every royall Burgh, that there may bee ſome proportion and equalitie. Others alſo are permitted although not to voice, yet to heare, propound, and debate, provided that they firſt obtaine leave of the Moderator: and that it may appear to be done *animo ædificandi, non tentandi.*

The firſt day of the aſſemblie is kept with a ſolemne faſt and humiliation, wherein the

whole Citie or Towne, which is the Seat of the assemblie, useth to joyne with powerfull preaching and earnest praiers from morning till night.

The particular Churches also throughout the Kingdome, upon the daies of their publick meeting, pray to God for his direction, assistance, and blessing unto the assemblie, that they may bee led into all truth, and all the Churches be refreshed with the sweet fruits thereof.

The next day the Moderator of the preceding assemblie beginneth with praier, causeth the Clerk call the Presbyteries, and take up the names of the Commissioners, Ministers, and Elders, who give in their Commissions, which being read, examined, and allowed, they proceed to the chusing of a new Moderator, keeping the same order which is set downe before in chooſing the Moderator of the Provinciall Synod.

The new Moderator calleth for the Records of the Synods, and by the voices of the assemblie chooseth a Committee for perusing and trying them; a Committee for the bils, complaints,

complaints, and petitions to be presented to the assemblie, and such other Committees as are ordinarie for preparing of weightie matters for the assemblie, and for cutting off idle and impertinent things, that the dispatch may be the more speedie and easie, when they shall be brought to open debate and voycing; all references from Synods, appellations, grievances, complaints, petitions, are here examined and answered; Acts and constitutions for all the Churches are agreed upon with common consent, and if there be any considerable contradiction, and the doubts and scruples, which are made be not satisfied, matters are remitted to further deliberation till the next assemblie; course is taken for planting of Churches, with able Ministers, that the Gospell may be spread through the whole Nation; Rules are set downe by which the inferiour assemblies shall bee directed in all their proceedings; all meanes used that the Church be not wronged, neither by confounding the Civill and Ecclesiasticall jurisdiction, nor by the abusing or interverting the patrimonie of the Church.

The Commiſſioners of each Presbyterie do carrie home with them a true copie of all ſuch acts as doe concerne all the Churches, that they may walk by one and the ſame rule.

The Moderator giveth forth Summons ſigned with his own hand, and the hand of the Clerke, for citing of perſons in the name of the aſſemblie to compare before the next meeting thereof, with certification of the cenſures of the Church in caſe of diſobedience.

The Concluſion.

IN the authoritie of theſe aſſemblies Parochiall, Presbyteriall, Provinciall, and Nationall, and in the ſubordination of the leſſer unto the greater, or of more particular Elderſhips to the larger and generall Elderſhip, doth conſiſt the externall order, ſtrength, and ſtedfaſtneſſe of the Church of *Scotland*, which is lovely and comfortable to all fearing God, whether Paſtor or profeſſors, and hath beene very awefull and terrible, as an Armie with Banners, to all Papiſts, to all Hereticks, Schiſmaticks,

maticks, Hirelings, and all ungodly persons: As upon the one part they break not the bruised reed nor quench the smoaking flax, but do cherish and labour to bring to ripenesse and use, the graine of Mustardseed in sincere beginners, and the smallest talent in Preachers having the zeale of God: So upon the other part, no scandall of proud sinners escapeth censure, no heresie or error is sooner hatched, but is either presently spied out and crushed by some of the inferiour assemblies, or, if it be kept on foot and gather strength, it is quite suppressed and extinguished in the generall assemblie which meeteth once in the year, and never suffereth such bastard births to grow to be one yeare old, which is a true and maine cause why no sects nor errours have appeared in the reformed Church of *France*, and in the Churches of *Scotland*, & of the *Low-Countries*, so long as they enjoyed the libertie and happinesse of assemblies, which they did no sooner by the mercie of God recover, but immediately at their brightnesse, the mists and mildewes gathered before were scattered and evanished. And as, by the order and power of these assemblies,

blies, Foxes are taken that they ſpoile not the Vines, and Gangrenes are prevented that they ſpread not againſt truth and unity, all ſorts of lewd and wicked men are diſcouraged and put to ſhame: So is there excited among the Godly Miniſters an holy emulation by acquaintance, conference, and by perceiving the gifts one of another, which maketh them returne from the aſſemblies, with a meane and humble conceipt of themſelves, and with new and ſtrong reſolutions for greater diligence in their ſtudies, and faithfulneſſe in every *Paſtorall* duty, to the common benefit and edification of all the Churches; all the Miniſters are made more wiſe in matters of Government; and all the Congregations are affected with reverence to what is required of them by their particular *Elderſhips*, as having the conſent and approbation of the whole *Church*. Many ſuch fruits are reaped of theſe aſſemblies, which without them no particular perſon or congregation can have any ground to hope for or expect.

They have no Arch-biſhops, Dioceſan Biſhops, Suffraganes, no *Chapters*, no *Curats*, dumbe

dumbe nor idle Miniſters, no hirelings, non-reſidents, nor pluraliſts, no Deanes nor Arch-Deacons, no Chanters, Sub-chanters, nor Treaſurers, no Chancellors, Officials, nor Apparitors, no Canons, Peti-canons, Prebends, Singingmen nor boyes; And yet without theſe and the like, they have practiſe and uſe of all the ordinances of Chriſt; all matters Eccleſiaſticall determined, remitting queſtions of tithes, mariages, divorcements, &c. to the civill Judge to whom they properlie do belong, and all petitions, complaints, and Church grievances heard and redreſſed, which they eſteeme as the ſweet yoke of Chriſt, and think it a great eaſe both to their conſciences and eſtates to be free of ſuch bundles and burthens of traſh and ſuperfluities. They conceive that to erect Presbyteries, Synods, and Nationall aſſemblies, and ſtill to keepe Prelates and the members of that Hierarchie is, in the matter of Church government, not unlike the Popiſh adding of Traditions to Scripture in the rule of faith, or works unto faith in the point of juſtification, &c. additions to Chriſts inſtitution, being not only in reſpect of their

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author humane inventions, and for any uſe they can have idlements, vanities, and follies; but that they do alſo corrupt the purity, and eat out the life of the ordinances of Chriſt.

Here there is a ſuperiority without tyrannie, for no Miniſter hath a Papall or Monarchicall Juriſdiction over his own flock, far leſſe over other Paſtors, and over all the Congregations or a large Dioces. Here there is a paritie without confuſion and diſorder, for the Paſtors are in order before the Elders, and the Elders before the Deacons; the Church is ſubordinate to the Presbyterie, the Presbyterie, to the Synod, and the Synod to the Nationall aſſembly. One Paſtor alſo hath priority before another, for age, for zeale, for gifts, for his good deſervings of the Church, each one honouring him whom God hath honoured, and as he beareth the image of God, which was to bee ſeene amongſt the Apoſtles themſelves. But none hath power or juriſdiction above others: even as in nature one eye hath not power over another, only the head hath power over all, even as Chriſt over his Church. The ſame may bee ſeene in the Common-wealth, and in ſome of the

the offices of the Roman Church it ſelfe. And laſtly, here there is a ſubjection without ſlaverie, for the people are ſubject to the *Paſtors* and *Aſſemblies*, yet there is no *Aſſemblie* wherein everie particular Church hath not intereſt and power; nor is there any thing done, but they are, if not actually, yet virtually called to conſent unto it.

As they have done and ſuffered much for vindicating and maintaining the libertie of their Religion, that what belongeth unto God may be rendred unto God; So do they deſire, that according to the rule of righteouſneſſe, each man have his owne, and above all men, That the things which are *Cæſars* be rendred unto him, and to give him that which is Gods were a wronging both of God and *Cæſar*. They have ever beene willing to taxes and to pay ſubſidies above that wch they were able. They joyne wth the inward reverence of their hearts, externall honour and obedience in all things lawfull. They powre forth their prayers to God in private and publick, for all bleſſings ſpirituall and temporall upon his Royall Perſon and Government, and upon his *Progenie*;

and for the ſame bleſſings upon the Queenes Majeſtie, eſpecially that God by his Spirit would give unto her the knowledge and love of the truth. They long for her converſion as an happineſſe to her ſelfe, and a meane of great happineſſe to the King, to their Children, and to all their Subjects. And, that the Lord may anſwer their praiers, they think it incumbent to the Church of *England*, nor can any bond whatſoever oblige them to the contrarie, to uſe the beſt and moſt powerfull meanes, and would moſt willingly in all humilitie, love and reſpect, joyne their endeavours for that bleſſed end. And as they thus preſent their beſt deſires and prayers, ſo are they readie to ſacrifice their lives to God for his Majeſties good, and in their hearts are grieved that their loyaltie, which they account their no ſmall glorie, ſhould have beene called in queſtion.

Neither is this all. But moreover they doe acknowledge that his Majeſtie, as ſupreame Magiſtrate, hath not onely charge over the Common-wealth, but doth watch and hath inſpection over the Church and Church matters, but in a civill way. *Vos Epiſcopi in Eccleſia*

ſia (ſaith *Conſtantine*) *Ego extra Eccleſiam Epiſcopus à Deo conſtitutus ſum.* And therefore that he is, by his high calling and place, *Cuſtos utriuſq; tabulæ*, to command the precepts of the firſt table as well as of the ſecond table to bee obeyed: That he is *Vindex Religionis* by his ſword, as the Spirit of God in Scripture is *Iudex*, and the Church is *Index*: That hee hath power to turn the conſtitutions of the Church into lawes, and to confirme them by the civill ſanction in Parliament: That he may conſtraine all his ſubjects to do dutie in matters of religion, and may puniſh the tranſgreſſors: That when debates ariſe about Religion, hee hath power to call the Aſſemblies of the Church, to be preſent and civilly preſide in them, and to examine their conſtitutions, that he may diſcerne of them both as a Chriſtian caring for his own ſoule, and as ſupreame Magiſtrate watching over his people: and that he may do all things which can prove him to be a kinde and carefull nurſing Father. They account all that is vomited out to the contrarie, [as, that they liked *Anarchie* better then Monarchie, and that they would turne a King-

dome into a democratie, to be but the fictions and calumnies of the malitious enemies of God and his truth; not unlike the lies which were deviſed againſt the Chriſtians of old: their conſciences, their words, writings, and actions, even then when the world did put the worſt conſtructions upon them, were witneſſes of the integritie of their hearts. They doe ſtill hold that there can bee no antipathy betwixt one ordinance of God and another. *By him Princes do reigne*, and hee hath alſo appointed the Officers and Government of his own houſe. They do deſire nothing more then that the Sonne of God may reigne, and that with and under the Sonne of God, the King may command, and they, as good ſubjects to Chriſt and the King, may obey.

FINIS.